



County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

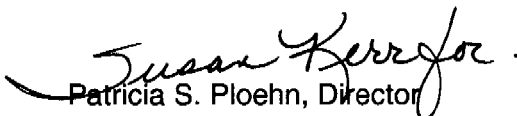
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PATRICIA S. PLOEHN, LCSW
Director

August 7, 2007

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

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From: 
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director

SEPTEMBER 26, 2006 BOARD ITEM # 18: SKID ROW ASSESSMENT TEAM

On September 26, 2006, your Board discussed recommended expenditures for the Housing and Homeless Program Funds. During the discussion, Supervisor Yaroslavsky instructed the Department of Children and Family Services (the Department) to submit a report every 60 days to ensure that the activities of the Skid Row Assessment Team (SRAT) are within the law (i.e., as it applies to child protective services) and the team is not detaining children inappropriately, and to use numbers and percentages to summarize the services. This is the fourth of the recurring 60-day reports.

The following table shows the number of referrals and detentions from the Skid Row area for the months of April 2007 through June 2007.

Month	Total Referrals*	SRAT Referrals (Sub-Total)	Total Children *	Referrals made on existing case	Referrals resulting in new case	Total children detained	% of County Detentions for this month **
April '07	9	2	19	3	0	0	0
May '07	12	6	20	1	1	2	.005 ¹
June '07	7	4	18	0	0	0	0

*Please note that the number of referrals is the number of families. The number of children is the total count of children within those families for which referrals were made.

**Percentage is an estimate and may change slightly in the next couple of months as information is finalized on CWS/CMS.

In order to keep the Board apprised of the numbers of new families encountered by the SRAT on Skid Row since the inception of the project, the following table is submitted. It provides data on the new families that have been encountered by the SRAT from January 18, 2005, through June 29, 2007.

¹ Two is .005 % of the total 38,281 DCFS cases or .013% of 14,947 total DCFS removals.

Location	January '05 to Sept. '06	Oct '06	Nov. '06	Dec. '06	Jan '07	Feb. '07	Mar. '07	April '07	May '07	Jun '07	January 2005 through June 2007 Total
Midnight Mission	331	10	23	19	5	11	12	11	38	35	495
SRAT	450	0	0	4	0	0	5	0	3	2	464
URM	124	7	5	9	7	3	13	10	13	29	220
Weingart	182	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	183
	1087	18	28	32	12	14	30	21	54	66	1362

In addition to the above new families encountered by the SRAT, during the months of April through June, the SRAT provided approximately 880 services to the families they encountered. These services are documented in the Permanent Housing Assistance Services database. The services to the families may include the following: referring the family for counseling to address domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health issues; linking the family to a resource such as a food or clothing bank; referring the family to a housing locator through the Weingart Center or Beyond Shelter; providing a support service; completing an assessment; creating an individualized housing and services plan; referring the family for and/or completing an assessment to address mental health, physical health, or child abuse issues.

On December 18, 2006, the contract between the County and Beyond Shelter was signed and on January 18, 2007, they began accepting referrals into the Skid Row Demonstration Project (SRDP) from the SRAT. The following table reflects some of the activities on the referrals that were generated from the SRAT to Beyond Shelter for the months of April through June 2007.

Total Referrals For Emergency Housing	Families placed in hotels	Families Placed in shelters	Families Moved into Master Leased Apartments	Families declining emergency Shelter	Families with special needs	Intensity of Service Needs-Families with special needs			
						High	Moderate	Low	Pending/ In the assessment process
127	112	15	38	0	60	40	18	2	0

Please note that the number of families determined to have special needs may change as the assessment between Beyond Shelter and the family evolves. As well, the Intensity of Service Needs may change as new information is factored into the assessment of the family.

Between the dates of January 18, 2007 and June 30, 2007, 248 families were enrolled into the Demonstration Project. These included 174 families referred directly by the Skid Row Assessment Team, 53 families referred from the Beyond Shelter backlog of Skid Row families provided emergency services in the Fall, and 21 families who came to Beyond Shelter's offices directly from Skid Row. Of these families, 180 were relocated into hotels outside the Skid Row area, 31 were relocated into emergency shelters outside Skid Row, 15 were already in emergency shelters through the 120-day Department of Public Social Services program, 2 were placed in treatment/sober living programs, 4

failed to show up for the intake appointment, 2 failed to show up at the hotel after intake, and 14 refused to relocate out of the Skid Row area.

A full report prepared by Beyond Shelter on the 1st and 2nd quarters of the SRDP is attached. In the report they present an over-view of the project, challenges and modifications to the program, demographics of the families enrolled, and two case summaries.

During the second quarter of the project, a major challenge has been identified. This involves the unforeseen expenditures in the area of hotel vouchers. It is the result of a combination of factors including the following: the scarcity of vacancies in the shelter care system; the additional time required to address the families special needs prior to referring to the Housing First Program; the difficulties in obtaining the family's documents such as birth records, employment and income verification; and delays in the processing of Section 8 applications with the Housing Authority, City of Los Angeles.

We are working closely with Beyond Shelter, the Chief Executive Office, Housing Authority, and the Department of Public Social Services to over-come the identified challenges. This has resulted in a plan to improve the timelines in processing the families with Section 8. As an immediate effort, on July 28 Beyond Shelter held a Saturday event with the Housing Authority. The goal of the event was to issue Section 8 vouchers for a group of families and to conduct interview sessions for another separate group. Beyond Shelter rented 5 vehicles to transport families to a secured location next to the HACLA building to provide childcare for 42 children. The event was a complete success and resulted in 30 families receiving their Section 8 voucher and 10 families being interviewed who will receive their vouchers on August 3rd. To date, we now have 9 families in permanent housing.

Your Board Deputies have been progressively informed about the activities of the SRAT and the challenges with the SRDP. As agreed, we have continued to submit monthly reports. Each report included a Monthly Report on Skid Row Outreach Strategies, the Homeless Questionnaire Summary, and three case summaries for families assessed by the team. They have also received the 1st Quarterly Report on the Skid Row Demonstration Project.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me, or your staff may contact Armand Montiel at montia@dcs.lacounty.gov, or (213) 351-5530.

PSP:SK
TR:vm

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel

Attachment

**Report to the
Los Angeles County
Department of Children & Family Services**

Submitted by

Beyond Shelter

Skid Row Families Demonstration Project

**Performance Requirement Reporting
1st and 2nd Quarters
December 18, 2007 to June 30, 2007**

**Beyond Shelter
1200 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 600
Los Angeles, California 90017
213.252.0772**

Beyond Shelter

Skid Row Families Demonstration Project

Performance Requirement Reporting **1st and 2nd Quarters (January 18, 2007 to June 30, 2007)**

In partnership with the L.A. County Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Public Social Services (DPSS), Mental Health (DMH), Health Services (DHS), and Public Health (DPH), Beyond Shelter is implementing a 12-month Skid Row Families Demonstration Project, to relocate five hundred (500) homeless families from Los Angeles' Skid Row to emergency and short-term housing (Phase I), with four hundred and fifty (450) families subsequently moving into and stabilizing in permanent housing (Phase 2). The Demonstration Project is intended to illustrate the social and economic benefits of coordinating services and systems in innovative ways to assist families to exit homelessness.

To facilitate the move into permanent housing, the Project received an allocation of 300 Section 8 vouchers from the Housing Authority, City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and 50 Section 8 vouchers from the Housing Authority, County of Los Angeles (HACoLA).

ABOUT BEYOND SHELTER

Founded in 1988 by Tanya Tull, Beyond Shelter's core program, Housing First for Homeless Families, introduced an innovation in the field: moving homeless families into permanent housing *as quickly as possible*, with the provision of the services traditionally provided in transitional housing provided instead *after the family has moved into their own housing*. Experience has shown that even a short period of homelessness can, and often does, cause social, physical and psychological trauma to families, especially to children. The Housing First program model reduces family trauma and increases family stability by focusing on permanent housing. The methodology coordinates and integrates existing systems and services in new ways and also addresses "gaps" in service delivery, rather than duplicating existing services systems.

The "housing first" methodology provides a means for high-risk, multi-problem homeless families to move into permanent housing and receive individualized, home-based case management support as they regain stable living patterns or gain them for the first time. Housing First is a visionary, socially responsive, and also cost-effective approach to ending family homelessness that has helped to transform both public policy and practice on a national scale.

STATEMENT OF THE NEED

Over the past few years, Los Angeles County has experienced an increase in family homelessness. Although job loss, domestic violence, substance abuse or other crisis may precipitate a homeless episode, the primary cause is the lack of affordable housing. Without access to affordable housing or rent subsidies, CalWORKs families in particular are at high risk for homelessness. Once homeless, it has become extremely difficult, if not impossible, for many homeless families to move back into permanent housing. The problem has been exacerbated over the past few years by decreasing access to Section 8 rent subsidies.

With the numbers of homeless families in Los Angeles County increasing, as new families lose their housing and currently homeless families fail to move back into permanent housing, there has been a corresponding increase in families who could be termed "chronically homeless." Most visible in the Skid Row/Downtown L.A. area, they may also be found in significant numbers in areas of South L.A., the San Gabriel Valley, the San Fernando Valley and the City of Long Beach.

The primarily female heads-of-household in homeless families often suffer from general depression and many have histories of domestic violence and/or drug or alcohol abuse. Family dynamics are often unstable or stressful, money management and household management skills may be weak, and extended family support or other social support systems have been exhausted or are non-existent. Additionally, agencies working with homeless families for many years believe that many homeless mothers suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, occurring in conjunction with related disorders such as depression, substance abuse, problems of memory and cognition, and other problems of physical and mental health. (The disorder is also associated with impairment of the person's ability to function in social or family life, including occupational instability, marital problems and divorces, family discord, and difficulties in parenting.)

Deep poverty and housing instability are especially harmful during the earliest years of childhood; alarmingly, it is estimated that almost half of children in shelters are under the age of five. The experience of homelessness itself causes social, physical, and emotional stressors on both parents and children of all ages. Even a short episode of homelessness is a devastating experience for families, parents and children alike. It disrupts virtually every aspect of family life, damaging the physical and emotional health of family members, interfering with children's education and development, and, in some cases, resulting in the separation of family members, when children are placed in foster care or parceled out to relatives.

Under the severely adverse conditions of homelessness, it is hardly surprising that homeless children suffer from severe emotional, social, developmental, educational and health problems. Researchers have reported high rates of developmental delay and poor physical health, and elevated levels of depression, anxiety, and behavioral problems. Homeless preschoolers exhibit delays in language development, motor skills, cognitive ability, and personal and social development. They have short attention spans, exhibit withdrawal, aggression, speech delays, sleep disorders, "regressive" toddler-like behaviors and immature motor behavior. Studies show that the trauma of homelessness

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affects children long after housing has been acquired. Homeless single mothers often suffer from maternal distress and have poor coping and parenting skills. Once housed, their children continue to experience severe emotional, social, developmental, educational, and health problems, the result of housing instability, family instability, and the long-term impact of homeless episodes on their growth and development.

According to a recent survey by the Shelter Partnership, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit agency, the emergency shelter system in Los Angeles County has capacity for less than 25% of homeless families seeking assistance. Other families are denied entrance into shelters and transitional housing programs due to the ages of their children, family make-up, pregnancy or recent birth of a child. As a result, a subgroup of families who lose their housing are remaining homeless for extended periods of time or are experiencing multiple episodes of homelessness. Many of these families cycle in and out of the Skid Row area of Los Angeles.

The Skid Row Families Demonstration Project is an effort to improve coordination between public and private agencies to serve a specific subgroup of the homeless families population: families with children encountered and receiving services in Skid Row. The multiple needs of these homeless families necessitate service integration and improved coordination both within the homeless services delivery system and also between that system and related systems.

It is hoped that this innovative collaboration between Beyond Shelter and L.A. County will result in new partnerships and improved coordination between public and private systems serving homeless families, while helping to address current barriers and challenges and create new solutions.

OVERVIEW OF THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

SKID ROW SERVICE SITE BOUNDARY: For the purposes of the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project, Skid Row is defined as having the following geographic boundary: Third Street to the North, Alameda Street to the East, Main Street to the West, and Seventh Street to the South.

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC: The target demographic for the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project is homeless families with children under 18 years of age (including one adult and one child), who are living temporarily in a shelter in Skid Row; who are encountered in Skid row and provided a hotel voucher by an agency in Skid Row, such as the Midnight Mission, Union Rescue Mission, or Weingart Center, or by Beyond Shelter; and originally encountered in Skid Row and can demonstrate that they have no safe shelter for that night. A program modification has now allowed homeless families encountered by the Skid Row Outreach Team at Pershing Square or in the city library to also be screened and assessed for eligibility for enrollment.

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START-UP ACTIVITIES:

The Start-Up phase of the Demonstration Project began on December 18, 2006, upon signing of the contract with the County of Los Angeles. Within the next 30-day period, Beyond Shelter leased and furnished additional space to accommodate project staff at its current Central Satellite Office located at 207 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, within a few blocks of Skid Row. Hiring and training of new staff was conducted, with additional personnel hired and trained over the next few months. The first families were referred to the Demonstration Project on January 18, 2007. Protocols for screening, referral, and processing of families into the Demonstration Project were developed early in the process, and then modified periodically, as Beyond Shelter and the participating L.A. County Departments together began implementing the program. The Skid Row Assessment Team (SRAT) continues to meet weekly with Beyond Shelter and the DCFS Contract Manager, to problem-solve, develop new forms and assessment tools, and to meet challenges as they arise.

OUTREACH AND REFERRAL:

Homeless families encountered in Skid Row with no place to sleep that night, or sheltered by an agency in Skid Row either on-site or through a hotel voucher, are referred to Beyond Shelter by County of Los Angeles DPSS Homeless Case Managers (HCM) co-located in Skid Row with other members of the Skid Row Assessment Team (SRAT). for enrollment in the Demonstration Project. All families are screened and assessed by the Skid Row Assessment Team, prior to referral to Beyond Shelter. Assessments are conducted by DCFS, DPSS, DMH, and DPH. As the team leader, DCFS is responsible for ensuring coordination between members of the SRAT and between the SRAT and Beyond Shelter. A small number of families walking directly into Beyond Shelter's offices from Skid Row are also screened and assessed for the Demonstration Project, with assessment by the SRAT team occurring prior to enrollment.

ENROLLMENT INTO THE PROJECT:

From January 18, 2007 through June 30, 2007, 248 families were enrolled into the Demonstration Project. These included 174 families referred directly by the Skid Row Assessment Team, 53 families referred from the Beyond Shelter backlog of Skid Row families provided emergency services in the Fall, and 21 families who came to Beyond Shelter's offices directly from Skid Row. The following table breaks down the frequency of entrance for clients per category (SRAT Referral vs. Walk Ins vs. Backlog) by month:

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Project Referrals by Type and Month

Month	SRAT	Walk In	Backlog	Totals by Month
January	26	0	1	27
February	15	2	11	28
March	33	3	28	64
April	16	2	9	27
May	35	11	4	50
June	49	3	0	52
Totals by Category	174	21	53	248

Walk-Ins to Beyond Shelter

During the same time frame, a total of thirty-five (35) families seeking emergency shelter came directly into Beyond Shelter's Central Satellite Office and were either referred back to DPSS Homeless Case Managers in district offices or were referred to emergency shelters and/or other agencies outside the Skid Row/Downtown L.A. area for services.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

PHASE I: Crisis Intervention & Short-Term Housing Program

Relocation Outside Skid Row within 24 Hours: The program design requires that all families enrolled into the program be relocated outside the Skid Row area into short-term housing the same day or within 24 hours (unless they choose to remain at the Union Rescue Mission or other temporary housing program until relocation to permanent housing). Short-term housing is defined as motels, extended-stay motels, master-leased apartments utilized as shelter, and emergency shelters and transitional housing. For the purposes of immediate shelter outside Skid Row, the majority of families are placed in motels within a short distance of the Downtown L.A. area, while being further assessed for appropriate short-term housing placement responsive to their individualized needs.

During the reporting period, 179 families were relocated outside Skid Row within 24 hours. Four enrolled families chose to remain at Union Rescue Mission, while processing a Section 8 application. The remainder of families were being sheltered outside the Skid Row area at the time of enrollment.

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Initial Short-Term Housing Placements for New Enrollees by Referral Type

Reporting Categories	SRAT Referral	Walk In	BEYOND SHELTER Backlog
Number of Clients	174	21	53
Families relocated to a hotel outside the Skid Row area within 24 hours of program entrance	142	19	19
Families relocated into emergency shelter*	1	0	30
Families who were already in emergency shelter (i.e. 120-day program)	12	2	1
Families who refused relocation out of SKID ROW area	13	0	1
Families where head of household was placed in treatment/sober living	0	0	2
Families who failed to show up for intake	4	0	0
Families who showed up for intake but failed to show up at the hotel and are considered MIA	2	0	0

*26 additional families were subsequently replaced into emergency shelters after the initial hotel placement

Crisis Case Management: Each family enrolled into the program is assigned to a Crisis Case Manager, who provides short-term case management for approximately 30-45 days or until a Housing First Case Manager is assigned. Families are assisted in moving their belongings to motels and are provided bus tokens and food vouchers. To ensure child welfare and safety, families with substance abuse histories, psychiatric disabilities, DCFS histories, or those whose children have special needs (i.e. developmental delay, medical condition), are also referred to Beyond Shelter's Children's Services Specialists for interventions and referrals to appropriate services and resources in the community.

Crisis Case Managers maintain contact with families through both office or motel visits, continuing to assess families for emergency and crisis needs. At the same time, information is being gathered in order to further assist families with referrals to resources and services in the community at-large. (See **Attachment: Services Provided**)

The Need for Further Screening, Assessments, and Interventions: In many cases, the initial screening by the L.A. County Departments of Children and Family Services and Mental Health have not identified current active substance abuse, domestic violence, or moderate to severe health and mental health needs. Once referred into the Demonstration Project and further assessed by Beyond Shelter over a period of weeks, problems often become apparent that were not identified at the time of the original screening and assessment by the SRAT.

In such situations, families are referred immediately to appropriate County of Los Angeles or community-based resources for further assessment and the delivery of specialized services. Families with "special needs" related to current and active substance abuse are referred to substance abuse detoxification programs; those with untreated or undiagnosed mental health problems are being referred to the L.A. County Department of

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Mental Health for further evaluation. Based on the medical and mental health evaluations, families will not move into permanent housing without appropriate interventions and/or treatment.

Problems Accessing Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing: In the original program design, it was expected that approximately 200 of 500 families would be relocated a second time, into existing emergency shelters and transitional housing programs located throughout L.A. County, where they would remain until Section 8 vouchers were issued. An additional 50 families would be sheltered through the LAHSA/CalWORKs 120-Day Hotel Shelter Program, 50 special needs families would be moved into apartments that were leased and furnished by Beyond Shelter to be utilized as shelter (master-leased apartments), and the balance would move from motels directly into permanent housing that would be subsidized for up to two years.

As described in the First Quarterly Report, it quickly became apparent that the availability of emergency shelters and transitional housing had decreased significantly during 2006 and 2007. As a result, families entering into the Demonstration Project are being vouchered into motels for longer periods of time, until alternative and appropriate short-term housing for each family can be arranged. It became further apparent that families who were denied Section 8 certificates or who were ineligible to apply often required further assessment and stabilization before being assisted in moving into permanent rental housing with a two-year subsidy.

The Use of Master-Leased Apartments: In the revised program design, the majority of families enrolled in the Demonstration Project are being, or will be, assisted in moving into apartments leased by Beyond Shelter as shelter. (Please see Modifications to the Program for further information on master-leased apartments.) This new model has demonstrated significant cost savings to the program (\$48/night in a master-leased apartment versus \$86/night for a motel) and also provides a more normalized living environment for homeless families with children.

The original program design anticipated that families would remain in short-term housing until moving into permanent, rental housing through the Housing First Program. It was anticipated that this process would take approximately 90 days, after enrollment into the Housing First Program. Although HACLA was committed to "fast-tracking" applications from the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project, problems with the processing of Section 8 applications became apparent early in the program. (See Modifications) As a result, families are staying in short-term housing (including motels and master-leased apartments) for longer than 90-days while waiting for issuance of a Section 8 voucher.

In the new program design, some families will remain in the original apartments and "transition in place", as determined on a case-by-case basis. In these instances, the lease on the apartment will be transferred from Beyond Shelter to the family, who will then become the sole leaseholder. The majority of families, however, will be assisted in utilizing their Section 8 voucher to obtain safe, decent, and affordable rental housing in residential neighborhoods located throughout L.A. County, convenient to schools, transportation, and other services or resources a particular family may need. Once in permanent housing, families receive six months of voluntary, intensive home-based case management, to help them stabilize and to connect to community-based services and resources for longer-term support.

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SCREENING/ASSESSMENTS FOR SERVICE NEEDS:

Upon intake, families enrolled into the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project are assessed to determine special needs and the level and intensity of services required, based upon a typology of homeless families and screening tools developed specifically for the Demonstration Project by Beyond Shelter (see attached). The Intake process at Beyond Shelter for enrollment into the Demonstration Project is therefore extensive and can take as long as four hours. Families are carefully screened and assessed for low, moderate, or high intensity service needs using the Service Needs Intensity Assessment Tool. Information is cross-checked with information on PHASE and other information provided by the DPSS Homeless Case Manager and other members of the SRAT.

Based on this intensive screening process, families are identified as having High Intensity Service Needs, Moderate Intensity Service needs, or Low Intensity Service Needs. Families are additionally identified for Special Needs using a separate screening tool, which includes some of the same indicators as the Service Needs Intensity Assessment and which is being used primarily to identify cases requiring "special processing and monitoring." For example, this could include a family with a newborn or about to give birth; a family with a chronic illness of adult or child; or a large family with more than five children.

The resultant Service Needs Intensity Assessment document helps to determine the Crisis Intervention and Short-Term Housing Plan. It also helps to direct the frequency and type of case management contacts that will be provided both before and after the family is moved into permanent housing.

EVALUATION OF SERVICE NEEDS:

The following information is based upon assessments of 227 families, from a total of 248 families enrolled during the first six months of the Demonstration Project (January 18, 2007 through June 30, 2007). Based on a review of data collected at intake into the Demonstration Project, a total of 125 families of 227 families were considered to have High Intensity Service Needs and 57 families were assessed as having Moderate Intensity Service Needs. These totals show that 80% of families have serious challenges. The 125 families with High Intensity Services Needs demonstrated multiple indicators, including DCFS involvement (Child Welfare category), emancipation from foster care, and having a disability.

A total of 108 families (48%) enrolled into the Demonstration Project had at least one "special need" requiring special attention, monitoring and/or intervention. A total of 44 families possessed multiple special needs. Additionally, 25 families who had an adult with a special need also had at least one child with special needs and another 10 families who did not have an adult with a special need had a child with as many as 3 special needs. These figures in themselves represent a challenge for case management and appropriate linkage to services.

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This table breaks down in ascending order the special needs identified per category for the heads-of-household:

Special Needs of Adult Caregivers

Category	Number
Child Welfare (DCFS)	37
Disability	24
Illness (Not classified as a disability)	24
Family Size (5 or more children)	16
Single Father	13
Newborn	11
Emancipated	11
Pregnancy	9
Physical/Mental	15
Recovery Substance Abuse	9
Active Substance Abuse	5

The following table breaks down the special needs identified for children at the assessment period upon enrollment into the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project:

Special Needs of Children

Category	Number
Disability (Physical, Mental, or Developmental)	12
Illness (Not classified as a disability)	6
Physical/Mental Development Delay (Not a disability)	18

Of the 125 families determined to have High Intensity Service Needs, not surprisingly, many of them also possess special needs, as illustrated below.

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Special Needs of High Intensity Service Cases

Category	Frequency Number
Child Welfare (DCFS)	32
Disability	23
Illness (Not classified as a disability)	28
Physical/Mental	22
Emancipated Youth	10
Family Size (5 or more children)	11
Pregnancy	8
Single Father	8
Newborn Child	8
Active Substance Abuse	5
Recovery Substance Abuse	5

The number of families with open DCFS cases increased to 45 families during the reporting period, with the addition of 13 families who became involved with DCFS after their initial assessment and enrollment into the Demonstration Project were conducted.

REFERRALS FOR SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY:

During the reporting period, there were a total of 667 referrals made for services in the community at-large. These referrals included services for:

Advocacy, Shelter Services, Mental Health Services, Health Services, Employment, Services, Domestic Violence Intervention, Substance Abuse Intervention, Parenting Education, Transportation, Rent Assistance, American Indians, Incarceration Assistance, Documentation, Food Banks (see pages 24-25 for a description of these services).

The following table breaks down the referrals in ascending order:

Community Referrals by Type

Category	Frequency Number
Combination (Food Bank, Shelters, Documentation)	534
Job Training or Job Placement	32
Child Care (separate from the child resources department)	26
Mental Health Treatment	23
Domestic Violence Counseling	17
Medical and Dental Care	17
Legal Services	10
Substance Abuse Treatment	10
Move In funds	1
GED Programs	1

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REFERRALS FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES:

The Children's Services Specialist has several duties, which include assessment of children upon intake, home visitation with Case Managers, screening and assessment of children referred by both Crisis Intervention Case Managers and Housing First Case Managers, participation in Team Decision Meetings when the family has been involved with a hotline call to DCFS, the provision of ongoing advocacy and referrals, and collaboration with other agencies to assist families. An ancillary role includes the maintenance, inventory and documentation of disbursement of clothing, diapers, food, toiletries, and books, and to obtain cribs, strollers, school uniforms, and car seats.

From mid-February 2007 to mid-July 2007, the Children's Services Specialist received approximately 104 referrals, from both Housing First and Crisis Intervention Case Managers. The primary services provided include the following:

Parenting Education, Counseling, Schooling, Childcare, After School Activities, Health.

**PHASE II:
Enrollment into The Housing First Program**

Once temporarily stabilized in a hotel, emergency shelter, master-leased apartment or transitional housing program and the families' emergency and basic needs are being met, participants in the Short-Term Housing Program are referred to Beyond Shelter's Housing First Program for intake and enrollment. At the same time, families are assisted in applying for a Section 8 subsidy through the Housing Authority, City of Los Angeles, or the Housing Authority, County of Los Angeles. During the reporting period, a total of 248 families were enrolled into the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project. Of those families, 122 families were subsequently referred to and enrolled into the Housing First Program component of the project.

Beyond Shelter's Housing First Program is an existing program operating since 1989, which receives referrals of homeless families from approximately 50 emergency shelters and transitional housing programs located through L.A. County. Over the past 18 years, more than 3,300 homeless families have been assisted in moving into, and stabilizing, in permanent rental housing, with a 90% success rate.

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For the collaboration with L.A. County, the program model has been modified significantly, in order to accept referrals of homeless families directly from Skid Row, rather than directly from emergency shelters and transitional housing programs.

Originally, it was anticipated that families would move quickly through the initial Crisis Intervention and Short-Term Housing phase and be referred to, and enrolled into, the Housing First Program within 30 days of enrollment into the Demonstration Project. However, a number of factors have delayed this process, including the following:

- The high number of families referred in a short time period, needing to be properly screened and assessed for eligibility (taking 3-4 hours per family)
- The high number of families being referred to the Demonstration Project without vital documents necessary for further processing (i.e. birth certificates and/or valid identification)
- The difficulty many families have had in keeping scheduled appointments, which must then be rescheduled
- The number of families with High Intensity Service Needs, requiring a longer period of crisis intervention and ongoing monitoring, before a permanent housing plan can be developed.

Due to a backlog of applicants, plans were made to slow down new enrollments into the project during the month of August, to enable Beyond Shelter to continue to process current families for Section 8 vouchers and enroll them into the Housing First Program.

DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY ACTION PLANS:

Within approximately 30 days of enrollment into the Housing First Program, families are assigned to a Housing First Case Manager, who works with each family both before and after the move into permanent housing. In conjunction with the Housing First Case Manager, each family develops an Individualized Family Action Plan, which is modified over time. The individualized Family Action Plan is developed in phases and consists of the family's needs assessment, priorities/goals, and special needs (which includes, but is not limited to, mental health, substance abuse, employment, domestic violence, children's needs, etc.). The Family Action Plan and case notes also maintain up-to-date information on the status of the family's Section 8 application or other permanent housing plan; this includes working with a Housing Specialist assigned to the family.

Once assigned to a Housing First Case Manager, the head-of-household and case manager together develop individualized Family Action Plans, with the level of Service Need Intensity and "special needs" helping to shape the plan. Specific tasks and responsibilities of the head-of-household and the case manager are written into the plan to meet the family's immediate objectives and longer-range goals.

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During families' participation in the program, Housing First Case Managers continue to screen and assess families for low, moderate, or high intensity service needs, as addressed in the Service Needs Typology for Homeless Families, including the special needs of children in the family. Family Action Plans are modified over time, as objectives and goals change and/or are accomplished.

MOVEMENT INTO PERMANENT HOUSING:

Families enrolled into the Housing First Program are assigned to a Housing Specialist, who works closely with the family and case manager to develop and then implement a permanent housing plan. A Housing Needs Assessment form identifies geographic preferences, rent, size of units, credit issues, and other problems or special needs that may delay the process of moving into permanent housing. The head of household attends a series of group sessions at Beyond Shelter, in which the Section 8 application process is reviewed and monitored. At the same time, information is provided regarding housing search and lease negotiation, which will occur with the assistance of a Housing Specialist, once the Section 8 voucher has been received. Each family is also given handouts developed by Beyond Shelter on Tenant Rights and Responsibilities.

Delays in Submitting Section 8 Applications: During the reporting period, Beyond Shelter processed one hundred twenty-eight (128) Section 8 applications, but only seventy-eight (78) were sufficiently complete for submission; the others were waiting for vital information to be obtained from government sources. Families must provide birth certificates, social security cards, proof of income, and proper identification for each family member in order to submit the application, yet approximately 90% of the families enrolled into the Demonstration Project in the first six months did not possess proper documentation for at least one of their children. Original birth certificates are required, yet obtaining them from out-of-state has often taken up to 2-3 months. HACLA has now stated that they will accept copies based upon Beyond Shelter's statement of authenticity.

Delays in the Processing of Section 8 Applications at HACLA: The rapidity with which a family can be assisted in moving into permanent housing depends upon the time it takes for a Section 8 voucher to be issued. Due apparently to an overload of applications from throughout the City of Los Angeles, combined with understaffing at HACLA, Section 8 applications for Demonstration Project participants have taken as long as four-five months to process. As a result, families have been forced to remain in temporary housing for extended periods of time, including in hotels, shelters, and master-leased apartments.

Permanent Housing Placement: Once families have been issued a Section 8 voucher, housing placement assistance includes housing search, lease negotiation, assistance overcoming bad credit, eviction histories, and discrimination based on ethnicity, income source, gender, and homelessness. After participants are relocated to permanent housing, Housing First Case Managers assist each family in accessing additional household furnishings, enrolling their children in school, and learning about and stabilizing in their neighborhood.

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For the reporting period, nine (9) families were placed into permanent housing (8 with the assistance of both City and County Section 8 vouchers and one into a Fair Market Rent unit), with seven (7) additional families waiting for Section 8 inspections on their permanent housing units before being authorized to move in. The families were assisted in locating and moving into rental housing within the city and county of Los Angeles (i.e. South Los Angeles, Highland Park, the San Fernando Valley, Torrance and Lancaster). Monthly rents range from \$900 up to \$2350, depending upon the size of the units.

HOME-BASED CASE MANAGEMENT:

Families enrolled into the Housing First Program are provided home-based case management for six full months after the move into permanent housing, to improve their coping skills, become reoriented to stable living patterns, and establish links with community based resources and services. Families are also introduced to their new neighborhood – its shopping, transportation, and community resources and services.

The frequency and duration of home visits depend upon the family's level of service need. Participant families with **high intensity service needs** are visited weekly during the first 90 days after the move into permanent housing and for a minimum of one home visit per month for the next 90 days, with phone contact weekly. Participant families with **moderate intensity service needs** are visited weekly during the first 30 days, bi-monthly during the next 60 days, and monthly for the next 90 days, with phone contact as needed. Participant families with **low intensity service needs** are visited monthly for 180 days (six months), with weekly phone contact for the first 90 days and thereafter as needed.

Families are supported as they improve their coping skills and are provided assistance with homemaking, nutrition and parenting, budget planning and money management. Each family receives its own copies of the **Family Survival Guide** and **Successful Household Money Management**, two Beyond Shelter publications. Families who are referred for Beyond Shelter Children's Services are provided child abuse and neglect intervention and prevention, assistance in obtaining childcare, and referrals to address health, developmental, and other special needs of children. Throughout the case management program, families may be referred for specialized Children's Services. Beyond Shelter also provides job readiness and job placement activities to heads-of-household in non-CalWORKs families, and other adults who are hard-to-employ.

Graduation and Follow-Up:

After the six-month case management program has been completed, families graduate, but then receive six months of follow-up phone contact for monitoring and crisis intervention by the Housing First Case Manager. It is anticipated that approximately 75% of families will receive monthly phone contact to monitor their continued transition to stability. Follow-up will focus on timely payment of rent, participation in employment programs, money management issues, additional assistance from Beyond Shelter through referrals for services/resources, and the provision of crisis intervention services.

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Performance Requirement Summary Table

Strategy	Operational Measure	Indicator
<p>Short-term housing within 24 hours (in response to referrals to Beyond Shelter)</p> <p>and</p> <p>The Hotel Voucher Program.</p> <p>Ref. Sec. 9.1 & 9.2</p>	<p>Number of families relocated to short-term housing, including designated hotels, emergency shelters, and/or transitional housing.</p>	<p>There were 179 families relocated into short-term housing; 69 families were already in short-term housing, including hotels, emergency shelter, and/or transitional housing.</p>
<p>Short-term housing for families with special needs.</p> <p>Ref. Sec. 9.3</p>	<p>Number of families with special needs placed into short-term housing for families with special needs.</p>	<p>There were 78 families with special needs placed into short-term housing.</p>
<p>Referrals to resources and specialized services in the community, prior to moving into permanent housing, including referrals for children with special needs.</p> <p>Ref. Sec. 9.4</p>	<p>Number of families who received referrals to community-based resources and specialized services, including referrals for children with special needs.</p>	<p>There were 236 families with referrals to community-based resources and specialized services including referrals for children with special needs.</p>
<p>Permanent Housing for Housing First Program Families.</p> <p>Ref. Sec. 9.5 & 9.6</p>	<p>Number of families moved into permanent housing within 90 days.</p>	<p>There were 9 families who moved into permanent housing and 114 who obtained, or were in the process of obtaining, a Section 8 voucher.</p>
<p>Case Management for Housing First Program families.</p> <p>Ref. Sec. 9.6 thru 9.10</p>	<p>Number (100%) of families enrolled in the Housing First Program, with a developed individualized Family Action Plan and receiving case management support.</p>	<p>There were 122 families enrolled into the Housing First Program. All 122 families have a Family Action Plan that has been developed jointly with the Case Manager and each family.</p>

CHALLENGES & MODIFICATIONS TO THE ORIGINAL PROGRAM DESIGN

Hotel Voucher Usage:

In the contract design, it was anticipated that 200 of 500 families would be referred to existing emergency shelters and transitional housing programs, after short stays in hotels. Unfortunately, this resource proved to be unreliable, due to the increase in family homelessness throughout L.A. County. As a result, families have been forced to remain sheltered in hotels through vouchers for longer periods of time, averaging two-three months, while waiting for a Section 8 voucher or movement into a master-leased apartment.

The number of referrals into the Demonstration Project from the SRAT increased dramatically in the months of May and June, nearly doubling the number of families being sheltered in hotels. The slow processing of Section 8 certificates by HACLA further aggravated the problem. This caused a financial overload on a system that relies on the quick exit of families into permanent housing and/or into existing emergency shelters and transitional housing programs while waiting for movement into permanent housing.

Master-Leased Apartments as Shelter:

As described in the introduction, the Demonstration Project is intended to illustrate the social and economic benefits of coordinating services and systems in innovative ways to assist families to exit homelessness. The use of master-leased apartments is one such innovation being promoted as a family-friendly and cost effective alternative to conventional homeless programs. Through this model, Beyond Shelter is the leaseholder on an apartment and each homeless family lives there as a "guest." Due to the lack of emergency shelter and transitional housing for families in the Demonstration Project, Beyond Shelter has been in the process of master-leasing up to 135 apartments to use as "short-term housing/shelter" for families waiting for Section 8 vouchers, in order to be able to move into permanent housing. This viable alternative to the emergency shelter system has proven to be not only cost-effective, but also provides a more normalizing and stabilizing living situation for families. The cost per apartment unit is approximately 50% less per night than hotel costs. Additionally, each unit is equipped with basic furnishings, linens, and cooking supplies, purchased with the family's "furniture allowance." These furnishings and household goods belong to the family and will follow them to their permanent, rental housing.

By June 30, 2007, 99 apartments had been master-leased for temporary shelter/short-term housing, with 12 additional apartments in the process of being leased by the agency. Landlords do not start rent until a family has been moved into a unit. By June 30, seventy-five (75) Skid Row families had moved from motels into master-leased apartments. The 99 apartments included 16 studio apartments for small families, 21 one-

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bedroom apartments, 37 two-bedroom apartments, 21 three-bedroom apartments, and 1 four-bedroom and 3 five-bedroom apartments for very large families.

All units are located within a few mile radius of Beyond Shelter's main program office, which facilitates both office visits by the family and home visits by the case manager. During the year-long lease period, one apartment may serve as temporary housing for multiple families, with each successive family replacing the previous family who has moved into permanent housing.

Processing of Section 8 Applications:

The Skid Row Families Demonstration Project was allocated 300 Section 8 vouchers from the Housing Authority, City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and 50 Section 8 vouchers from the Housing Authority, L.A. County (HACoLA). Processing of the Section 8 applications begins immediately upon enrollment into the Demonstration Project for the majority of participants. A meeting was held in February 2007, with representatives of HACLA, HACoLA, DCFS and Beyond Shelter to identify ways to expedite the process and submission of Section 8 applications. Within a few months, however, the following problems became apparent:

- (1) Staffing challenges at HACLA caused delays in processing of Section 8 applications in a timely manner. Rather than six weeks to issue a certificate as originally agreed to by HACLA, the applications are most often taking four to five months to process. During this time, families generally remain in motels and master-leased apartments at a high cost to the project budget. With a large influx of applications from many different agencies serving homeless families, HACLA's ability to process applications, schedule interviews, and issue vouchers to families has been seriously compromised.
- (2) Further aggravating the problem is the lack of documentation of many of the Skid Row families, in which they do not have birth certificates for children and other needed documents. Beyond Shelter does not submit applications to HACLA or HACoLA for processing until all required documentation is in the file.

As a result of these problems, meetings were held in July with HACLA, the DCFS Project Manager, and Beyond Shelter to identify ways to facilitate issuance of Section 8 vouchers for applications already at HACLA and to expedite acquisition of necessary documentation through DPSS resources, where possible, including income verifications. To remedy the situation immediately, HACLA is scheduling an overtime Saturday (occurred July 28th) for Housing Authority staff, to interview and provide vouchers to Demonstration Project families currently in their system. In new protocols, DPSS will provide income verifications and other available documents directly to HACLA, and HACLA will accept copies of birth certificates certified as authentic by Beyond Shelter.

Additionally, HACLA will increase staffing to handle the overload of applications from agencies and to improve the inspection process. No problems have been identified with the HACoLA process, to date.

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Case Management Challenges:

The high intensity service needs of the majority of families enrolled into the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project have challenged the case management process. According to service providers in Los Angeles County, homeless families today appear to be more overwhelmed and depressed than homeless families in previous years. Many are refusing services that are offered or isolating themselves from services. As a result, it has become increasingly difficult to intervene and to engage them, in order to take the steps necessary to help resolve their current homeless crisis.

Further demoralizing families are crisis intervention and emergency shelter services that often recycle them through the system without positive outcomes, i.e. without movement into permanent housing. Many families today refuse to enter emergency shelters and transitional housing programs, even when space is available for them. Others are unable to enter shelters and transitional housing due to a variety of factors, including the fact that the number of families seeking shelter dwarfs shelter capacity in Los Angeles County.

There are several additional factors that have challenged the case management process, including the following:

- During the screening process by L.A. County Departments, including DPSS, DCFS, DMH, and DPH, active substance abuse often goes undetected. As a result, families are often enrolled into the Demonstration Project before substance abuse is identified. Beyond Shelter believes that up to 25% of heads of household in participant families display behaviors indicative of active substance abuse, which, if detected before enrollment, would help to establish stronger case management plans, including more specialized, short-term housing placement.
- Adults in families who have a chronic mental health problem combined with a possible substance abuse problem or domestic violence problem pose additional challenges. Chronic mental health issues become exacerbated by the experience of homelessness. Often, after the head of household has been screened and referred to Beyond Shelter by the participating L.A. County Departments, additional substance abuse, domestic violence or child protection issues come up that were previously undetected. This often requires immediate crisis intervention and significant modification to the short-term housing plan.
- While the mental health of the head of household is of primary importance, it has become apparent that many children and youth in Demonstration Project families have serious and undiagnosed mental health problems. In some situations, both short-term housing and permanent housing options have been compromised. Children enrolled into the Demonstration Project are not currently being assessed by the Department of Mental Health prior to a referral.

Demographics of Families Enrolled In the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project

This report presents data collected on 227 families of a total of 248 who entered the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project between January 18 to June 27, 2007. One of the most important data collection forms is the intake form consisting of 16 pages of detailed accounting of demographics, homelessness history, and psychosocial services history. Beyond Shelter developed a database system to collect this raw data for descriptive analysis and to better understand the various characteristics of homeless families being served.

ETHNICITY

African American	160
Hispanic	45
Caucasian	8
Native American	3
Mexican American	1
Mixed heritage	4
Other	2
No Answer	4

MARITAL STATUS

Single	138
Separated	25
Married	25
Divorced	20
Domestic Partner	7
Widowed	7
No Answer	5

AGE OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

Under 18 years old	1
18 to 24 years old	40
25 to 30 years old	54
31 to 35 years old	40
36 to 40 years old	38
41 years and over	53
Unknown	1

The biggest subgroup of head of household age coming into the Skid Row Demonstration Project falls between the ages of 25 to 30 years old (N=54). There is good distribution between age brackets except for those under age 18 (N=1) and those over 41.

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LANGUAGE

English only	195
Spanish only	15
English/Spanish	11
Spanish/English	4
English/Other	2

The dominant subgroup under this category was monolingual English, with only 15 families or 7% of the total grouping needing exclusive monolingual Spanish services.

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF ADULT CAREGIVER

This table showcases the breakdown of education levels among families entering the project.

Category	Yes	No	No Answer
Did you attend High School	222	1	4
Did you graduate High School	109	118	0
Do you have a GED	15	NA	0

This next table of self reported information breaks down the actual level of grade completion for those heads of household who attended high school.

Highest Grade Completed	No Answer	9th	10th	11th	12th
Totals	27	5	18	54	115

RECENT SHELTER OR MOTEL USE

The head of household self reported data yielded the following information, when asked about their homelessness experience dating back 30 days from their intake date.

Category	Yes	No	No Answer
In the last 30 days were you vouchered by a private or public agency?	69	158	0
In the last 30 days did you try to access shelter in LA County and were denied?	39	188	0
In the last 30 days did you try to access transitional shelter and were denied?	15	212	0

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The following table presents the self reported data heads of household provided when asked how long the family had been in the Skid Row area:

LENGTH OF STAY IN SKID ROW

Duration	Totals
1 to 5 days	59
1 to 4 weeks (but less than a month)	38
1 to 3 months	40
4 to 6 months	26
More than 6 months but less than a year	14
1 to 5 years	27
More than 5 years	3
Inconclusive answer/no answer	20

The following table represents self-reported data heads of household provided when asked about their most recent living situation prior to entering the Skid Row area:

LIVING SITUATION PRIOR TO SKID ROW

Categories	Totals	Range of Stay
Hotel/motel, paid by voucher	48	2 days to 8 months
Friends or Relatives	47	1 night to 6 years
Rental Housing	47	1 month to 6 years
Hotel/motel, not paid by voucher	19	1 week to 2 years
Emergency Shelter	17	2 days to 6 months
Streets/Car	14	1 day to 1 year
Transitional Shelter	5	3 weeks to 1 year 7 months
Domestic Violence Shelter	4	21 days to 9 months
Substance Abuse Program	3	1 month to 19 months
Foster Care	1	NA
Jail/Prison	1	30 days
Psychiatric Facility	1	8 months
Inconclusive/No Response	20	NA

The following table represents data gathered during the intake process where the head of household provided information regarding the family's prior experiences of homelessness:

NUMBER OF PREVIOUS HOMELESS EPISODES

Past number of times family has been homeless	Yes my family has been homeless before	No, this is the first time my family has been homeless
	Total N for subcategory = 111	Total N for subcategory = 116
One time	69	NA
2 to 3 times	28	NA
3 to 4 times	8	NA
5 or more times	5	NA
Can't remember/No Answer	1	NA

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CALWORKS RECEIPT AND HOMELESS CASE MANAGEMENT

Most families enrolled into the project are CalWORKs recipients and have a Homeless Case Manager at their designated County DPSS office of service. The following tables demonstrate data collected on both categories:

Answer	Are you receiving CalWORKs?	And are you enrolled in GAIN?	And do you have a GAIN worker?
Yes	175	74	67
No	52	4	2

YES I have a Homeless Case Manager	144
NO I do not have a Homeless Case Manager	83

These two tables demonstrate a trend of families who are currently receiving CalWORKs assistance and do have a Homeless Case Manager. A secondary trend with less strength is the enrollment into the GAIN program.

During the intake process, most families were aware of the existence of a Homeless Case Manager attached to their County services. These same families stated that they were not actively receiving services, and were not willing to go back to mediate any services with their assigned Homeless Case Manager.

Average Family profile

The average family composition is African American, with a single female head-of household between the ages of 26-29. The head of household does not have a relationship with the father(s) of the children but has a significant other in her life. The family has three children between the ages of 6-9 years old, and the children are currently attending the L.A. public school system. The head of household was born in LA County and has never left LA County. The head of household has extended family but does not have the support of such relatives. The family receives assistance from CalWORKs in the amount of \$ 543.00. However, approximately 20% of families also have SSI or SSA, putting the average income for all cash aid at \$714.00. Upon referral to Beyond Shelter, the family has already received Homeless Assistance from DPSS. The head of household has a special need as defined by Beyond Shelter's typology chart, such as a disability, past open DCFS involvement, or a newborn child.

The family became homeless because they could not support rent. The family does not have savings, does not have a bank account, and has bad credit. The family has never participated in the Section 8 program. The head of household did not graduate high school and does not have a history of continual employment of more than one year. The family does not have a car and relies on public transportation. The family falls under the definition of chronically homeless.

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ATTACHMENT: SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH REFERRALS:

After enrolling in the Demonstration Project, families received some of the following services:

Advocacy – This included processing eligibility for homeless assistance when clients were sanctioned or were not currently receiving funds; advocating for clients to be assigned a DPSS Homeless Case Manager in order to have access to funds for which they were eligible; assisting clients to obtain Medi-Cal; referring clients for GAIN and overcoming eligibility issues; referrals to Legal Aid and Homeless Court for litigation services; and frequent referrals to Consumer Credit Counseling. Clients were also referred to Homeless Court to receive services to remove warrants and outstanding tickets.

Shelter Services – Some families were referred for emergency and transitional housing services, including to Faithful Services, Henderson House, WLCAC, New Image, Project Achieve, Salvation Army, Portals, House of Ruth, Alexandria House, and others.

Mental Health Services – Counseling services were provided by DMH, Child Guidance Clinic, Amanecer Community Counseling, and Kedren Counseling Center. Referrals and assistance were also provided to the same providers to obtain medication, mental health intervention, one-on-one therapy and group therapy.

Health Services – Referrals were made for specialized health services to a variety of clinics and hospitals.

Employment Services - Employment services referrals were made to Beyond Shelter's Employment Services Department. Referrals were also made to Vocational Rehabilitation programs for school and job training.

Domestic Violence Intervention – Clients who refused to enter Domestic Violence shelters were vouchered into hotels and referred for ongoing assessment and DV classes. Clients were also referred/accompanied to court for restraining order assistance.

Substance Abuse Intervention – Clients were referred to agencies such as House of Uhuru, People in Progress and Alcoholism Center for Women for substance issues, 12-step meetings and substance abuse recovery support.

Parenting Education - Clients were referred for parenting and anger management to agencies such as Hope Again and Beyond Shelter's Parents Anonymous classes in South L.A.

Transportation – Clients were referred to the MTA for reduced fare bus passes and student passes. Clients were also referred to City Ride for taxi vouchers and Access Transport when a member of the family had a disability/handicap.

Rent Assistance – Clients with disabilities and receiving SSI were referred to the State Franchise Tax Board for renter's assistance. Other clients moving into permanent housing received move-in funds through Beyond Shelter's Rental Assistance Department.

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American Indians – Clients who met the requirements were also referred to American Indian agencies for assistance in obtaining tribal numbers and other support services for American Indians.

Incarceration Assistance – Clients with incarcerated family members were given referrals to Friends Outside for support services.

Documentation – Referrals under this category helped the family begin the process of obtaining documents such as birth certificates, California ID, social security cards, immunization, and marriage and death certificates. The Church of Nazarene, Weingart Access Center, identified County of Los Angeles offices, and DMV, were some of the resources providing these services.

Food Banks – The referrals for free groceries included SOVA and the Christian Food Center.

REFERRALS FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES:

Parenting Education – Referrals to Children's Institute, Avalon Carver Community Center, Families In New Directions, El Nido Family Services, The Parenting Institute, and others, depending on the geographic location of the family.

Counseling – Referrals to address behavioral problems and family dynamic problems. Referrals to places such as Seven Generations Child and Family Counseling Center, Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, The Children's Institute, and the child's designated school psychologist.

Schooling – Assistance is provided to ensure that families have a school identified for their children that addresses their geographical need and acceptance of their children immediately. Children are enrolled into Head Start and Early Head Start. The Children's Services Specialist works closely with the Los Angeles Unified School District Homeless Education Program to verify enrollment, link children with transportation, and obtain school supplies or clothing vouchers.

Childcare – Assistance is provided in locating and enrolling children into childcare programs, including to the Children's Institute.

After School Activities – Assistance is provided in locating after school programs, such as the Boys and Girls Club and local YMCA's.

Health – Referrals are made for dental and other health services for children.

Beyond Shelter

SKID ROW FAMILIES DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

SERVICE NEEDS INTENSITY ASSESSMENT FORM

PLEASE NOTE: This form is to be filled out by the family's Crisis Case Manager using the completed Intake Form. It is meant to be completed without the family.

Case File#: _____ Participant Name: _____

This form is intended to assist the case manager to holistically assess a family's needs and to plan case management services accordingly. Service needs are grouped according to two general categories, general family needs and income/education/employment needs.

Once a family is permanently housed, the frequency and duration of home visits will depend upon the family's GENERAL SERVICE NEEDS.*

- **High intensity service needs:** Family will be visited weekly during the first 90 days after the move into permanent housing and for a minimum of one home visit per month for the next 90 days, with phone contact weekly.
- **Moderate intensity service needs:** Family will be visited weekly during the first 30 days, bi-monthly during the next 60 days, and monthly for the next 90 days, with phone contact as needed.
- **Low intensity service needs:** Family will be visited monthly for 180 days (six months), with weekly phone contact for the first 90 days and thereafter as needed.

After completing the form, mark the following boxes as appropriate.

*GENERAL FAMILY SERVICE NEEDS

	LOW-INTENSITY
	MODERATE-INTENSITY
	HIGH-INTENSITY

INCOME/EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

	LOW-INTENSITY
	MODERATE-INTENSITY
	HIGH-INTENSITY

GENERAL FAMILY SERVICE NEEDS

Part 1A Instructions: For each specific need or issue, check the intensity level that most closely reflects the family's current situation. Use your judgment to make decisions based on the definitions for each category.

Homelessness History

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> One-time homeless less than six months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> One-time homeless more than six months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Chronic (multiple episodes) or episodic; homeless more than two years |

Substance Abuse

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> No history |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Demonstrated sustained abstinence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Actively abusing <u>or</u> in recovery but not sustained recovery |

Mental Health

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Stable mental health, no diagnostic history |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Suspected disorder but still undiagnosed; depressed, anxious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Current diagnosis (DMH or equivalent) or very unstable (psychotic, depressed, manic, suicidal, etc.) |

Domestic Violence History

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> No history |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Head-of-household is free from batterer and has completed DV counseling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Recent or current victimization <u>or</u> currently undergoing DV Counseling <u>or</u> history of abuse with multiple partners |

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Single Fatherhood

- ☐ Moderate-intensity Definition: Single father with teenage child(ren)
- ☐ High-intensity Definition: Single father with child(ren) under 12

Eviction History

- ☐ Low-intensity Definition: No evictions
- ☐ Moderate-intensity Definition: One eviction
- ☐ High-intensity Definition: Multiple evictions

Child Welfare Status

- ☐ Low-intensity Definition: Family intact with no history of child welfare system involvement
- ☐ Moderate-intensity Definition: Recently reunified or history but not recent of child welfare system involvement
- ☐ High-intensity Definition: Open DCFS case; history of child welfare system involvement; recently reunified

Criminal History

- ☐ Low-intensity Definition: No history
- ☐ Moderate-intensity Definition: 1-2 prior arrests but no felony record
- ☐ High-intensity Definition: Recently released/paroled; felony record

Foster Care Emancipation History of Head-of-Household

- ☐ Low-intensity Definition: No history
- ☐ High-intensity Definition: Emancipated from foster care within last 6 years

Age of Head-of-Household

- ☐ Low-intensity Definition: 25 or older
- ☐ High-intensity Definition: 18-24 years old (transition-age youth)

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Health/Disability Status

- ☐ Low-intensity Definition: No disabilities or health conditions in family
- ☐ Moderate-intensity Definition: Some health issues, untreated or currently being addressed
- ☐ High-intensity Definition: Multiple disabilities in family and/or chronic health Conditions

Part 1B Instructions: Add up the total number of check marks for each category from Part 1A and record those numbers below.

Category	Total
Low-intensity	
Moderate-intensity	
High-intensity	

If there are one or more high intensity service needs, then the case should be considered as high intensity.

If there are one or more moderate intensity service needs and no high intensity needs, then the case should be considered as moderate intensity.

If either of these statements applies, immediately check high intensity or moderate intensity service needs on page 1 in the General Family Service Needs Table. In addition, place the appropriate sticker on the case file to indicate the intensity of the case.

Now proceed with the rest of the form.

INCOME, EDUCATION, & EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

Part 2A Instructions: As in Part 1A, for each specific need or issue, check the intensity level that most closely reflects the parent's current situation. Use your judgment to make decisions based on the definitions for each category.

Income

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Living wage employment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> TANF only, unemployed, underemployed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Unemployed, no income, no benefits |

Welfare/TANF Status

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> No sanctions, full benefits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Sanctioned |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Timed off, child-only case |

Employment History

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Recent, stable work history |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Poor, sporadic work history |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> No work history |

Educational History

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Some college or advanced certification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> High School Diploma or GED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Did not graduate high school; no GED |

Legal Status

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Documented, parents and children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate -intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Undocumented parent(s), but 1 or more children are U.S. citizens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-intensity | <u>Definition:</u> Undocumented, no resources |

BEYOND SHELTER

Skid Row Families Demonstration Project

Six-Month Report

Part 2B Instructions: Add up the total number of check marks for each category from Part 2A and record those numbers below. As with Part 1, **if there are one or more high intensity service needs**, then check high intensity on page 1 in the income, education, and employment table. **If there are one or more moderate intensity service needs and no high intensity needs**, then check moderate intensity on page 1. Then proceed with the rest of the form.

Category	Total
Low-intensity	
Moderate-intensity	
High-intensity	

Do you agree with the rating (i.e., high, moderate, or low) of the family's general service needs on page 1? Describe why you do or do not feel the family's (parent's and children's) needs are of this intensity?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

BEYOND SHELTER

Skid Row Families Demonstration Project

Six-Month Report

Do you agree with the rating (i.e., high, moderate, or low) of the family's income, education, and employment needs on page 1? Describe why you do or do not feel the needs in these areas are of this intensity?

[illegible]

Completed by: _____ Date of completion: ____/____/____

NOTE: Give a copy of this completed form to Lisa Whitaker.

Beyond Shelter

SKID ROW FAMILIES DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

SPECIAL NEEDS SCREENING TOOL

Participant Name: _____ Date: _____
 (please print)

Parent's/Family's Special Needs			
	Special Need	Description of Need	Evidence of Need/ Source of Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Third-Trimester Pregnancy	Mother is 6-7 months pregnant	Self-report
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Newborn Child	Has a newborn, 0-3 months	Birth certificate; Social Security Card
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Disability	Physical, mental, or developmental disability	DMH Diagnosis; DMH records
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Active Substance Abuse (Drugs &/or Alcohol)	Currently abusing drugs and/or alcohol and will be participating in treatment	SRAT Assessment; Parent self-report
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Recovery From Substance Abuse (Drugs &/or Alcohol)	In recovery but less than 6 months	SRAT Assessment; Parent self-report
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Family Size	At least one adult and five or more children/youth	Birth certificates; Social Security Cards
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Foster Care Emancipation	Emancipated youth, 18-24 years old, with at least one child	DCFS records; parent self-report
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child Welfare Involvement	Has an open DCFS case or recent history with DCFS (within the last year)	DCFS records; parent self-report
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Illness or Chronic Health Condition (Not Classified As a Disability)	Has a major diagnosed illness (e.g., cancer) and is undergoing, or will be undergoing, treatment	Medical records; parent self-report
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Single Fatherhood	Single father with children	parent self-report

BEYOND SHELTER
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If applicable, please explain the nature of the head(s) of household's special needs and how you are substantiating this claim.

[illegible]

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Skid Row Families Demonstration Project

Six-Month Report

Child(ren)'s Special Needs			
	Special Need	Description of Need	Evidence of Need/ Source of Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Physical or Mental Developmental Delay	A developmental delay not classified as a disability	DCFS Assessment; Child Development Specialist's Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Disability	Physical, mental, or developmental disability	DMH Diagnosis; DMH records
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Active Substance Abuse (Drugs &/or Alcohol)	Currently abusing drugs and/or alcohol and will be participating in treatment	SRAT Assessment; Parent report
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Illness or Chronic Health Condition (Not Classified As a Disability)	Has a major diagnosed illness (e.g., cancer) and is undergoing, or will be undergoing, treatment	Medical records; Parent report

If applicable, please explain the nature of the child(ren)'s special needs and how you are substantiating this claim. Indicate by name and age which child has special needs.

[illegible]

BEYOND SHELTER SKID ROW FAMILIES DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

CASE HISTORY # 1

Ms. A is a 21-year-old, single mother of a two-year-old child. Her cash aid from CalWORKs was \$359.00 upon enrollment into the Demonstration Project, but was recently increased to \$584.00 with an additional benefit \$149.00 for Food Stamps.

Originally from South Carolina, Ms. A came to Los Angeles a few years ago to live with an aunt. She became homeless in 2006, when her aunt asked her to leave. She lived first at a "pay shelter" in Bellflower for three months, paying \$495.00 per month in rent. When she was unable to continue doing so, she sought shelter at Union Rescue Mission in the Skid Row area of Los Angeles.

She was referred into the Demonstration Project by the SRAT on 1/24/07 and was immediately enrolled and relocated outside the Skid Row area. She was screened and assessed as having high intensity service needs due to her age (18-24). Enrollment into the Housing First Program occurred on 2/28/07; an application for a Section 8 voucher was submitted to HACLA on 4/12/07; and issuance of the Section 8 voucher occurred on 7/6/07.

With the support of her Housing First case manager, Ms. A enrolled in the Westwood College for Criminal Justice. At the same time, she found a part-time job tutoring children in basic English and math at a local community resource center. She was also able to secure childcare resources through her school.

Currently living with her son in a Master-Leased Apartment located in South Los Angeles, Ms. A has saved money for her move-in costs for permanent housing and has also purchased a used car. Now that her Section 8 voucher has been issued, the current goal for is to secure an apartment close to the Hollywood area, because Ms. A is familiar with the area and her school is nearby.

CASE HISTORY # 2

Mr. and Mrs. H are parents of a three-year-old child. Their income from CalWORKs is \$723.00 per month, with an additional \$234.00 in Food Stamps.

The young couple became homeless in 2004, when, because of illness and a new baby, they could not afford to pay the rent on their apartment. With nowhere to go, the family found emergency shelter at Union Rescue Mission in Skid Row. They eventually entered the mission's Family Together Program and lived there for two years. This program closed in October 2006, but the family was allowed to stay there until enrollment into the Skid Row Families Demonstration Project.

Enrollment into the Demonstration Project occurred on 3/9/07, but the family again requested that they be allowed to remain temporarily at Union Rescue Mission. Enrollment into the Housing First Program occurred on 4/4/07 and the family was moved into a master-leased apartment outside the Skid Row area the next day, on 4/5/07. The family's Section 8 application was submitted on 3/16/07, and issuance of their Section 8 voucher for a two-bedroom apartment occurred on 5/25/07.

Although the family was deemed to have Low Intensity Service Needs, they do have health problems. The husband had leukemia, which is now in remission. The wife has been diagnosed as morbidly obese and has a musculoskeletal disease. They are currently taking care of their health problems through their medical insurance.

The Beyond Shelter Housing Specialist working with the family is currently seeking an apartment for them close to the Wilshire District, although this has proven to be a challenge. The wife's medical condition impairs her mobility, restricting many of the housing options in the area. Once an apartment has been found, Beyond Shelter will conduct lease negotiations for the family, as they have past evictions in their tenant history.

Once stabilized in permanent housing at a rent they can afford, one of the family's longer-term goals is for the husband to return to work as a theatrical dancer/teacher or in the arts. The family has a strong support network, which includes Patrice's mother.